

Vindicated Hunt: Libel award ends 'open sea'

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Watergate conspirator E. Howard Hunt broke down and cried yesterday after a jury agreed that he had been libeled by a newspaper article linking him to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

The federal jury awarded Hunt \$650,000 in damages for a 1978 article that appeared in Spotlight, a weekly newspaper owned by Liberty Lobby.

"I didn't care if the verdict was \$10 or a million," said Hunt. "Nothing really good, except my marriage, has happened to me in the last 10 years since Watergate."

The former CIA agent, who lives in Miami with his wife, Laura, had asked for \$3.6 million from Liberty Lobby. His attorney, Ellis Rubin, said Hunt's income dropped by \$27,000 in the year after publication of the Aug. 14, 1978, story, headlined "CIA to Nail Hunt for Kennedy Killing."

The article was written for a fee of \$500 by Victor Marchetti, another former CIA agent. Marchetti was not a defendant in the case.



Hunt

Hunt said that a jury indicated that he was "over" for him, and punished enough for years ago. Hunt served in federal prison for the Watergate break-in. He said the jury should warn others not to libel further libels, he said.

Rubin said the open season on "glars" and "agreements" and "agreements" name and reputation was "unable to him as any."

Of the accusation with Kennedy's assassination, he said, "It has been a sentence to live with. I was charged with no innocence, accused President Kennedy of a crime. Someone can't understand from day to day." He heard the verdict and "feel a great sense of relief."

The Marchetti CIA memo as said "will have to experience in Dallas on the day President Kennedy was killed."

Hunt testified in Washington when he was shot and that he was not the assassin of President Kennedy.

182